

Something is dreadfully wrong with this picture, and if we don't address this now, the consequences will be with us for generations to come.

What kind of a nation have we become that we put so little value on a school day? Every school day is sacred. It is an opportunity to expand a child's horizons, an opportunity to help a child build new relationships, an opportunity for a child to learn.

Our Nation's public schools cannot overcome the obstacles they face on the cheap. We might pride ourselves as being a superpower, yet we lag dangerously behind our counterparts in our commitment to fund education.

Of the major industrial nations, the United States ranks among the lowest in funding education at the Federal level, providing only seven percent of the costs. This figure pales by comparison when you look at our overseas competition.

Other nations hold their teachers in the highest regard, and compensate them accordingly. We do not.

I laud the efforts of the administration to boost Title I funding for the poorest schools, but the one billion dollar increase this year is still far short of the mark.

And I once again remind everyone in the Chamber of our failed promise to fund 40 percent of our schools' special education costs. We made that promise more than a quarter of a century ago. It is shameful that we have fallen so short.

In other nations, students spend far more time in classrooms than they do in the United States.

In China, the average school year is 250 days. In Europe, students spend an average of 190 days a year in the classroom.

In the United States, we are down to 180 days, and that number is likely to fall as school budgets are slashed, as we see happening today in Oregon.

We cannot, and we should not, stand idly by while our schools struggle without enough money to do their jobs. This is a national disgrace.

I understand that there are many priorities facing our Nation, perhaps too many for what our recessionary budget can afford.

But when we consider guns and butter, we must not allow textbooks to slip to the bottom of the list. The security of our great Nation is at risk, and the threat is right here at home.

We must act responsibly.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota is recognized.

#### COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, I was listening with some amazement to the discussion last night and earlier today about the reorganization, who is to blame, and who has the interests of the American people at heart. I have been kind of astonished at the reworking of the present reality and the past history by my Republican colleagues.

I am reminded that when I arrived at the Senate 2 years ago, I waited for 5 weeks to receive my committee assignments. We had, as others have said, a 50-50 split then, and the Republicans, because of the Vice President, had the majority. But it was unprecedented. So there was some reason for this delay. But then when Senator JEFFORDS moved over to caucus with our party in June of that year, I lost my committee assignments for the next 6 weeks while once again this agreement was negotiated.

Contrary to what I have heard from others across the aisle, it is my understanding that an agreement was reached for when the Senate was 50-50, and we had a provision that the agreement would end if and when the majority in the Senate moved to one side—not that it would remain the same for that entire session of Congress.

I had no committee assignments for 6 weeks while this split of 51 to 49 was being renegotiated, despite years of precedence and how we were told the Senate should be organized and how funds were distributed when the Senate was in clear majority by one side or another.

Those who are today shedding crocodile tears for their colleagues who are denied committee assignments certainly were not at all visible 2 years ago when I was waiting for those 6 weeks for my committee assignments to be reinstated.

I don't propose that our side should act as irresponsibly as others did 2 years ago. In fact, I am told that many of the chairs and ranking members of the various committees, as they will be reestablished under Republican leadership, have already reached their agreement about how they are going to allocate funds—either 50-50 or 60-40—along the lines of what they agreed to 2 years ago. It seems to me that those who are able to behave responsibly have already come to their own agreements regarding their committees and what we are left with are those who are holding out with insistence that they are going to have their two-thirds share.

I am reminded of my mother, when I was a child growing up with my brother and sisters, who said when we were squabbling over who was going to get this or that: Well, until you can work it out among yourselves, none of you will have it. It was amazing how, back then, it was possible for my brother and sisters at very young ages to work these things out, knowing that until we got it resolved, none of us could have what we wanted. So I think that would be a good admonition for my colleagues who are complaining today about the lack of organization.

I am reminded also that when we arrived here a week ago, our new colleagues were sworn in and the next day the Republican caucus wanted to adjourn to have a conference. In fact, we on the Democrat side wanted to stay in session. Senator CLINTON had an amendment to reinstate unemploy-

ment benefits for those who lost them in December. We asked for 30 minutes equally divided to debate that amendment and to have a vote. We were told we couldn't have that; there was not time. The Senate was adjourning to the next day so the Republican caucus could go out and have their conference.

We came back on Thursday. The Republican leader—the majority leader, now acknowledged by everybody and recognized as representing the majority caucus, the Republican caucus—told us on Thursday afternoon that there would be no votes on Friday, no votes until Monday at 5 o'clock. We had a long 4-day weekend and came back. I came back yesterday. I understood that we were going to have a hearing this morning—right at this hour, in fact—to confirm the nomination in the Governmental Affairs Committee of Governor Ridge as the new Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security.

I met last week with Governor Ridge. I told him he had my support. I met with the Secretary of the Navy last week, Mr. England, who will be the Deputy Secretary. I said I hoped we would have a hearing this week on his nomination, as well, so we could pass that—I expect virtually unanimously, or if not unanimously, on a bipartisan basis.

Yesterday afternoon, I was told that the committee meeting for today had been canceled—not by the Democrats, who were fully prepared to convene today, but by our Republican colleagues from each State who in turn would be asking questions of Governor Ridge. I cannot believe that any of us are going to have any objections to this outstanding American and public servant taking over this helm as rapidly as possible. He certainly has my full support.

But the committee hearing was canceled, I suspect more for the fact that the present chairman has expressed over the weekend some ambitions of seeking the Presidency than anything else because, as I say, last week, when Governor Ridge and Secretary England came to my office to meet with me, they understood we were having a hearing this week—the Governor did—and certainly understood that the arrangement was as it was.

Of even greater concern to me is the fact that we had a briefing on national security scheduled for this afternoon, a top secret briefing for Members of the Senate, with the Deputy Secretary of Defense, the Vice Chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Deputy Secretary of State, about the international situation in Iraq and North Korea.

We have been back a week. We have not had that briefing. I am a member of the Armed Services Committee. I have not had that briefing. At 2 o'clock this afternoon we were supposed to receive the information, of which we are certainly entitled as Members of this body in which the American people

elected us to represent their interests, and that briefing was canceled. Whether by the administration or the majority leader, I do not know, but it was not canceled by the Democratic caucus, I can assure you.

So when we talk about preventing this body from doing the business of the American people, representing the interests of the American people, I think those of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle should look in the mirror.

Frankly, for someone such as myself, and my position in seniority, this argument over funding for committees—two-thirds/one-third—gets to be a little bit surreal: Who should have a car, who should have a driver. I do not even have a car in Washington. I certainly do not have a driver. I get to work just fine every day.

If the American people knew what one-third of this budget or committee actually was, I think they would be astonished that anybody could not operate effectively on one-third of what we are talking about. In fact, I would propose, if we are really concerned about the taxpayers, as we profess, we should establish a precedent of one-third of the committee budgets for the Republicans and one-third of the committee budgets for the Democrats, and give one-third back to the American taxpayers. Give it to some needy food shelves around the country. Let's establish that for the President to follow.

Precedents get established and reestablished all the time. That would be a good one, to have the same funding for the Democrats and Republicans, regardless of who has the majority, and giving one-third back to the American people. And then let's proceed.

I might also point out that the majority leader has also announced, even if we do have an organizational resolution this week, we are going to be in recess next week. In other words, we were in session last week for a couple days, and will be in session this week for a few days, and then we are going to go off for a week. Lots of us have ideas of what we are going to do back in our States around the country, but the fact is, as others have said, we have the people's business before us.

I was delighted to see the Republican leader say that based on his priorities we would be dealing with prescription drug coverage for seniors in the very near future. I understood that was his first order of business, in fact. I thought that was just exactly the right priority for the American people.

So I suggest to the majority leader that, given these delays, let's get this organizing resolution resolved and then let's stay in Washington next week. Let's do the business of the people. Let's not leave Washington. Let's not go away for a weekend. Let's not go away for a week. Let's stay here in session until we get passed prescription drug coverage for seniors. If he kept all of us to the task, denying us our recess until we completed the business of

American senior citizens, I guarantee you we would have something done sooner rather than much later.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I have the opportunity to finish my remarks with an additional 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, might I inquire as to how many additional minutes we are talking about?

Mr. DAYTON. I have 5 more minutes approximately, I say to my colleague, and I would ask for an additional 5 minutes.

Mr. BENNETT. I have no objection.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DAYTON. I thank my colleague and the Chair.

#### CORPORATE TAX DODGERS

Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, the President announced a tax proposal last week. I call it "Leave No Millionaire Behind." He expressed his concern about the double taxation of corporate profits in America. I wish he would devote equal concern about the nontaxation of corporate profits in this country. It is estimated that now less than half of corporate profits are taxed at all. Through various tax and accounting gimmicks, some of the very profitable companies in this country not only have no tax liability whatsoever, they receive multimillion-dollar refunds from the American taxpayer.

Take CSX, for example, a company headed by the President's nominee for Secretary of Treasury, Mr. John Snow. For the last 4 years, CSX reported U.S. profits of \$934 billion. It paid, in American taxes, zero. It received rebates, in fact, from the American Treasury of \$164 billion.

Let me repeat that. CSX earned \$934 billion in profits on its American operations, paid zero taxes to the American Treasury, and received a \$164 billion refund from the American taxpayer.

I would say that is "compassionate conservatism," but it is certainly not double taxation. It is no taxation. And it is a big winner, increasingly so, on Wall Street. It is a reason that corporate income tax in this country has been a declining share of the Federal tax revenues over the last decades.

In 1960, corporate taxes amounted to 23 percent of Federal revenues. In 1970, that dropped to 18 percent; in 1980, 14 percent; last year, 10.5 percent. In other words, the corporate income tax share of Federal Government revenue is one-half of what it was 40 years ago.

There used to be an ethic in this country that business, being an integral part of the communities in which they operated, drew their lifeblood from the people of this country and from its democratic and capitalist structures, and that they had an obligation to give something back. But no longer.

The modern version of John Kennedy's inaugural refrain, "Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country," has become, in corporate America, "Ask what your country can do for you and what you can avoid doing for your country."

One of the most obvious and disgraceful tax avoidance schemes is the growing practice of some American companies of setting up sham corporate headquarters offshore in places such as Bermuda or the Cayman Islands. These tax-free havens permit the total avoidance of taxes for foreign operations and, in some cases, from domestic operations as well.

It is bad enough that profitable U.S. corporations can essentially renounce their U.S. corporate citizenship, but some of them continue to secure very large and lucrative contracts with our Federal Government, some even in the areas of national defense and homeland security. Evidently, they see nothing wrong with profiting off the U.S. Government and then avoiding paying taxes, even on those profits to support our very own Government.

One partner in Ernst & Young said recently: "A lot of companies feel that the improvement in earnings is powerful enough so that maybe the patriotism issue should take a back seat."

That is why last summer my colleague, Senator Paul Wellstone, amended the 2002 Defense appropriations bill to bar such corporate tax dodgers from being awarded Government defense contracts. Then he successfully amended the homeland security bill to bar those companies from getting contracts with the new Department of Homeland Security. Both amendments passed on the Senate floor by voice votes, seemingly unanimously.

However, after the November election, after Paul's tragic death, the final version of the homeland security bill gutted the Wellstone amendment. Whereas Paul's amendment permitted only the President to grant a waiver upon certification to the Congress that would be necessary for national security, the corporate callboys snuck in language that allowed the Secretary of Homeland Security to grant waivers for national security or for economic benefits.

Who could argue that tax-free Government contracts are not to someone's economic benefit? It seems if that corporate someone is big enough and rich enough to know who to call in Washington, and to pay \$1,000 an hour for what is euphemistically here called "Government relations," there is no doubt that the waiver would be granted. In other words, Paul Wellstone's legacy is going to be obliterated by waves of waivers, which is why we need more Paul Wellstones in Washington.

So, last week, to honor Paul's memory, to try to reclaim part of his legacy, I introduced the Senator Paul Wellstone Corporate Patriotism Act